

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 19-27 are pending in this application. Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,050,457 to Erfurt (“Erfurt”). Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt. Claims 7-9, 19, 21-24, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001-0043604 to Li *et al.* (“Li”). Claims 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,950,876 to Bright *et al.* (“Bright”) and further in view of Li. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of Li and further in view of Bright. Applicant herein amends claims 1, 10, 19, 24 and 25. No new matter has been added. Claims 1-13 and 19-27 remain pending.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 112

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, the Examiner states that the phrase “said signaling messages” lacks antecedent basis. Applicant amends claim 19 to replace the phrase “said signaling messages” with “said signaling message”, in accordance with the Examiner’s recommendation. Applicant submits that the amended claim overcomes the § 112 rejection.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5, 6, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Erfurt. Applicant respectively traverses these rejections and requests reconsideration of the claims in light of the arguments provided below.

Claim 1, as amended, generally recites a method for permitting communication between a first communication node and a second communication node. The first communication node and the second communication node is each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a

protocol or a different protocol. The method includes the following steps for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node: receiving a signaling message from the first communication node; querying a first Communications Node Database for information about the first communication node in response to the signaling message; querying a second Communications Node Database for information about the second communication node in response to the signaling message; making a decision whether the signaling message needs to be modified; and modifying the signaling message before it is transmitted to the second node in response to the decision.

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being anticipated by Erfurt. Erfurt, in general, teaches:

A method of communication between communications networks in which different communication protocols are used and which are connected to each other by way of at least one intermediate node. In order to communicate easily between the networks, both the destination node and the start node are prompted to use a common communication protocol by the intermediate node in that this node transmits messages to the destination node and the start node upon reading destination node information from a data collection. (Erfurt, abstract)

Applicant submits that the amended claim 1 is patentable over Erfurt because Erfurt does not teach every element of the claim. Specifically, Erfurt fails to disclose that, *for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node*, the signal message is modified, if required, before it is transmitted to the second node in response to a decision on whether the signal message needs to be modified.

Erfurt disclosed an intermediate node which is used to identify a common protocol that the start node and the destination node can use to communicate. According to Erfurt, the only time that the intermediate node modifies a message is when it receives the “start message” from the start node, before a common protocol between the start node and the destination node is identified. The start message is modified “by replacing an identifier of protocol A that is contained in this start message with the identifier, which it read from the database 21, of [the common protocol].... The modified message 23 is then forwarded to the destination node 11.” (Erfurt, col. 5, lns. 25-30; see also Fig. 2) Once the common protocol is identified by the intermediate node, the intermediate node forwards the subsequent signaling messages without

modification. According to Erfurt: “subsequent messages between the start node and the destination node which are set up according to the common communication protocol are forwarded by the intermediate node without modification.” (Erfurt, col. 1, lns 45-49)

In contrast, amended claim 1 explicitly states that the first communication node and the second communication node is each adapted to communicate in a different variant of a protocol or in different protocols. That is, the first communication node and the second communication node do not share a common variant of a protocol. As such, for *each* communication between the two nodes, the signaling message *must* be modified by the signaling mediating agent (SMA) if the SMA has determined that the signaling message needs to be modified, so that the destination node is able to process them. According to the specification: “[t]he signaling mediation agent (SMA) 130, facilitates communications among communication modes 105 by insuring that signaling messages transmitted by the SMA 130 have been modified so they conform to the protocol variants used by the destination communication node.” (p. 1, para. [0010]) As such, the present invention pertains to communications between two communication nodes which do not share a common variant of a protocol. Unlike Erfurt, without having the intermediate node, e.g., the SMA, deciding which signaling messages need to be modified and modifying those signaling messages, the first communication node and the second communication node cannot communicate with each other. Therefore, Applicant submits that amended claim 1 is patentable over the Erfurt and thus, should be allowed.

Claims 2, 3, 5, and 6 are dependent from claim 1, and thus should also be allowed. Claim 25 is amended similarly to specify that the signaling message is modified for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node. For the same reasons discussed above, claim 25 is also patentable over Erfurt.

Rejections Under 35 USC § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt. Claims 3 and 4 both depend from claim 1. For the same reasons discussed above, claims 3 and 4 should also be patentable over Erfurt.

Claims 7-9, 19, 21-24, 26, and 27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of Li. Claims 19 and 24 are amended similarly as claim 1 to specify that the signaling message is modified, if it is determined that the message needs to be modified, for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node.

In general, Li relates to address resolution in an asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) communication network. Regarding claims 7 and 8, the Examiner cites Li for disclosing using different signaling addresses and port number for sending signaling messages of different protocol types. (Office Action, p. 7) Regarding claims 19, 24, 26, and 27, the Examiner cites Li for disclosing using the originating address of a signaling message to determine whether to modify the signaling message. (Office Action, p. 9) However, like Erfurt, Li also fails to disclose modifying a signaling message, if it is determined that the signaling message needs to be modified, *for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node*. As such, the combination of Erfurt and Li fails to render obvious claims 19 and 24. Because claims 7-9 depend from claim 1, claims 21-23 depend from claim 19, and claims 26 and 27 depend from claim 25, claims 7-9, 21-23, 26, and 27 are also not rendered obvious by the combination of Erfurt and Li, and should be allowed.

Claims 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of Bright and further in view of Li. Claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Erfurt in view of Li and further in view of Bright. Claim 10 is amended similarly as claim 1 to specify that the signaling message is modified, if it is determined that the message needs to be modified, for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node.

In general, Bright discloses a multiple-protocol home location register. Regarding claim 10, the Examiner cites Bright for disclosing querying a database to authenticate an identity of a communication node. (Office Action, p. 12) Regarding claim 20, the Examiner cites Bright for disclosing using IP addresses. However, like Erfurt and Li, Bright also fails to disclose modifying the signaling message, if it is determined that the signaling message needs to be

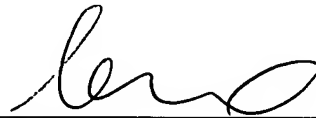
modified, *for each communication between the first communication node and the second communication node*. As such, the combination of Erfurt, Li, and Bright fails to render obvious claims 10. Because claims 11-13 depend from claim 10, and claim 20 depends from claim 19, claims 10-13, and 20 are not rendered obvious by the combination of Erfurt, Li, and Bright, and should be allowed.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of all the pending claims is hereby earnestly requested. Applicant requests withdrawal of all grounds of rejection, and allowance of claims 1-13 and 19-27 in due course.

If, in the Examiner's opinion, a telephonic interview would expedite the favorable prosecution of the present application, the undersigned attorney would welcome the opportunity to discuss any outstanding issues, and to work with the Examiner toward placing the application in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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